

April 14, 2021

Oregon Joint Committee on Ways and Means
State Budget Congressional District 1

To Whom it May Concern:

I am asking the Joint Committee on Ways and Means to appropriate funds for professional learning in the fundamentals of literacy instruction through **Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS)** training. Investing in teachers' literacy knowledge and professional practice based on the science of reading, backed by research, standards, and valid instructional design, can and will transform all student learning, and is vital for those with dyslexia and those who show risk factors for reading difficulties.

Funding LETRS training, starting in our underperforming schools, will give teachers a solid underlying knowledge base in the structure of our language system and in the content and process to teach reading to all students.

Starting early and following the significant body of research in effective practices can narrow and close the persistent gaps between more advantaged students and students living in poverty, students of color, and students who are eligible for remedial services.

I've been a public school teacher for over twenty years and the professional learning I gained through LETRS training is at the top of the list for empowering me to help students of all ages improve their reading, writing, and spelling. Providing this knowledge base for more teachers, especially in the early grades, will reduce the number of students I see in my High School classes who struggle with low literacy levels and the concurrent anxiety, shame, depression, and anger that comes from years of school failure.

In taking a look at where we have been and where we are now with our literacy rates, I'm interested in helping Oregon public schools do better in upholding our fundamental responsibility to teach all our students to read so that they may lead richer, more robust lives. Appropriating funding for LETRS professional learning is a solid step forward.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Danielle Thompson MAT, C-SLT
High School Teacher
Certified Structured Literacy Teacher
President, The International Dyslexia Association - Oregon Branch